

Local Conservation Agency: The Culpeper Soil & Water Conservation District

Conservation & Cost Share *By Greg Wichelns*

There are a number of conservation incentive programs available through various agencies that operate at the district level. Financial assistance is available in the form of cost share through these programs for landowners who would like to take steps to prevent the degradation of their resources and insure that productivity is maintained (see chart below). Technical design of management practices is also provided in such programs.

Cost share programs are, however, only part of the picture. Effective, long term planning for conservation involves a broader perspective which includes the development of a conservation plan that helps a landowner attain sustainable use and sound management of soil, water, air, plant and animal resources. Resource professionals with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Department of Forestry, the Culpeper SWCD and many other agencies are available to assist landowners in developing sound conservation plans.

The table below outlines these programs and provides basic criteria for each program that landowners may utilize as tools in developing a conservation plan for their land. For more information on conservation planning and incentive programs contact the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District office at 825-8591 in Culpeper, or 672-1523 in Orange. NRCS may be contacted at 825-4200 in Culpeper and 672-1523 in Orange.



Conservation Incentive Programs

Available in the Culpeper Soil & Water Conservation District

| Program | Cost Share Rate to Establish Practices | Agreement Period | Requirements | Annual Rental and Other Payments | Other Cost-Sharing | Where & When to Sign-Up |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| CRP Conservation Reserve Program | 50% | 10 - 15 years | cropping history during at least 4 out of the previous 6 years | Soil Rental Rate, +\$5 incentive, + \$5 maintenance (≤ county cap) | None | Contact FSA for signing period |
| CRP Continuous | 50% | 10 - 15 years | waterways and riparian areas only | Same as CRP | None | FSA |
| CREP Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program | 50 – 75% | 10 - 15 years | livestock exclusion, riparian buffers minimum 35’ – 100’, only grazed pastureland or cropland | \$75 - \$100/acre | VA BMP Program | FSA Continuous Signup |
| WRP Wetlands Reserve Program | 75 - 100% | Permanent Easement, 30-year Easement, 10-year Cost Share Agreement | livestock exclusion, must join two natural areas, must be a prior converted wetland | One time payment for up to 100% of appraised Ag value, not to exceed \$1,200 | None | NRCS Continuous |
| EQIP Environmental Quality Incentives Program | Up to 75% | 2-10 years Must be part of conservation plan | threat to soil, water, air, and related natural resources on land | None | VA BMP Cost Share Program | FSA or NRCS |
| WHIP Wildlife Incentive Program | 75% of estimated costs | 5 - 10 years | not restricted to agricultural land | None | Partners for Wildlife, VA BMP Program | NRCS Continuous |
| RT Reforestation of Timberlands | \$22/acre | 10 years | Water quality BMP's must be installed. Pines only. 100-acre maximum. | None | None | VA Department of Forestry |
| Partners for Fish and Wildlife | 75% to 100% | 10-year-minimum | wetland restoration, stream stabilization, riparian fencing, buffer establishment, alternate water sources, or waterfowl impoundments. | None | VA BMP, WRP, Partners for Wildlife | Culpeper SWCD |
| Virginia BMP Program | up to 75% | 5 - 10 years | existing water quality problems | None | None | Culpeper SWCD |
| Virginia BMP Loan Program | Low interest 3% loans – no maximum. | Up to 10 years | must be an eligible practice | None | None | Culpeper SWCD |
| BMP Tax Credit Program | 25% of out-of-pocket expenses | 10 - 15 years | existing water quality problem | None | BMP Program | Culpeper SWCD |
| Virginia Small Business Environmental Compliance Assistance Fund | Low-interest (3%) loan of up to \$100,000 | variable | Small business finance compliance with Federal Clean Air Act, voluntary pollution prevention, or Agricultural BMP's | None | None | DEQ Culpeper SWCD |
| ECP Emergency Conservation Program | 50 - 64% | 10 years | Damage to agricultural production due to declared agricultural emergency. | None | None | FSA |

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J. Brannon Godfrey, Jr.

COMMUNITY POOL UPDATE

By John Lassiter, Town Planner and Brannon Godfrey, Town Manager

Several months ago, Town Council directed the Town's Parks and Recreation Commission to evaluate information with regard to a community swimming pool. The Commission is assisted by a group whose members have expertise in various aspects of community pools (i.e. swim teams, operations, personnel). In the fall of 2003, the Town Manager presented the Commission's preliminary report to Town Council. The Commission is currently developing a revised report, which will detail a specific plan of action, to be presented to Council in March. Council will use these recommendations to determine how to proceed with the development of a community pool.

Town Council charged the Commission with sifting through a great deal of information. This involves organizing the various components of the project and making these all work in harmony, including: 1) land; 2) pool type; 3) financing; and 4) operations issues.

The Commission has determined that a parcel of at least five acres is needed for the development of a stand-alone facility. If constructed where site improvements can be shared with other functions or where needed improvements are already in place, this total space need can obviously be reduced. There are at least three sites currently under consideration.

The Commission is looking favorably on a PVC-coated stainless steel pool of at least 25 meters by 25 yards (regulation size) but is considering other surface materials as well. A second, smaller pool, of about 25 meters by 10 yards, is also being considered. The smaller pool would be kept at a higher temperature and could be used for seniors, children, and for other purposes. A portion of the pool building will be conventional "bricks and mortar." However, the Commission is also considering an air structure or "dome" to be located over the pool area itself. The dome could be removed in the summer and is relatively inexpensive to install (when compared to architectural walls), but would also have a shorter useful life.

The Commission also plans to present figures to the Town Council on the annual operating costs and revenues, drawing on examples of successful public pool operations in the region. Among the options is a fiscal scenario in which the community pool would operate at about a 5% - 10% profit. Finally, the Commission will evaluate several scenarios regarding staffing and contract operations and then make a recommendation.

Based on letters, editorials, and response to the Commission public hearing in January, there is overwhelming support for the community pool. The Town has a progressive reputation of promoting and sponsoring recreation within the community. It operates a park system of over 70 acres of parkland, as well as the surface area of over 350 acres on its two (2) water supply reservoirs. There are numerous recreational activities for all age groups within these parks. We also have a high school swim team that develops nationally recognized athletes. A swimming pool is the next big step, and Council has shown a commitment to building the right facility for the Town.

"Culpeper, Virginia - One of America's Top 10 Small Towns"

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Commonly Asked Questions About BSE

by Carl C. Stafford, Extension Agent

What is "Mad Cow Disease" (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy/BSE)?

Mad Cow Disease is the commonly used name for Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), a slowly progressive, degenerative, fatal disease affecting the central nervous system of adult cattle. Since 1990, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has conducted aggressive surveillance of the highest risk cattle going to slaughter in the United States, in which 10,000 - 20,000 animals per year have been tested. To date, the only cow that has been found to be affected with BSE was the one diagnosed with BSE in December 2003.

What causes BSE?

The exact cause of BSE is not known but it is generally accepted by scientists that infectious forms of a type of protein, prions, normally found in animals cause BSE. In cattle with BSE, these abnormal prions initially occur in the small intestines and tonsils, and are found in central nervous tissues, such as the brain and spinal cord, and other tissues of infected animals experiencing later stages of the disease.

Was a case of BSE identified in the U.S. in December 2003?

Yes, the USDA surveillance program identified the first BSE case in the U.S. in a dairy cow in Washington State. The cow was bought from a farm in Canada.

Did meat and meat products from the BSE cow enter the food supply?

As soon as the BSE case was identified, both USDA and FDA activated their BSE Emergency Response Plans, and USDA immediately recalled the meat. Meat that did enter the food supply was quickly traced and was removed from the marketplace. Moreover, all the organs in which infectious prions occur were removed at slaughter and did not enter the food supply. Muscle meat is not a source of infectious prions. As a result of the agencies' quick actions and the removal of organs that contain infectious prions, there is no significant risk from products of this animal.

FDA and state inspectors located all other parts of the animal, and rendering plants that processed this material from the BSE cow voluntarily held the material. None of this material left the control of the companies.

Will there be additional cases and is the food supply safe?

Regulatory measures to prevent introduction of BSE into U.S. cattle herds and contamination of U.S. foods and food products are being reviewed and updated. Since 1989, the USDA has banned imports of live ruminants, such as cattle, sheep and goats, and most products from these animals from countries known to have BSE. This ban was extended to all Europe in 1997. The FDA prohibited the use of ruminant protein in the manufacture of animal feed intended for cows and other ruminants in 1997 and extended the prohibition in 2001 to forbid use of all mammalian protein in ruminant feed.

In 1998, the USDA commissioned the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis to conduct an analysis and evaluation of the U.S. regulatory measures to prevent the spread of BSE in the U.S. and to reduce the potential exposure of U.S. consumers to BSE. The Harvard study concluded that if introduced, due to the preventive measures currently in place in the U.S., BSE is extremely unlikely to become established in the United States. Should BSE enter the United States, the Harvard study concluded that only a small amount of potentially infective tissues would likely reach the human food supply.

Does BSE affect people?

There is a disease similar to BSE called Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease (CJD) that is found in people. A variant form of CJD (vCJD) is believed to be caused by eating contaminated beef products from BSE-affected cattle. To date, there have been 155 confirmed and probable cases of vCJD worldwide among the hundreds of thousands of people that may have consumed BSE-contaminated beef products. The one reported case of vCJD in the United States is in a young woman who contracted the disease while residing in the UK and developed symptoms after moving to the U.S.

What additional measures are being taken to ensure food safety in the U.S. from BSE?

Following the identification of the BSE-positive cow imported from Canada additional regulations were implemented to expand food supply safeguards:

1. A ban on non-ambulatory cattle from entering the human food supply
2. A ban on use of organs, from cattle older than 30 months, in which infectious prions occur and the tonsils and small intestine of all cattle for human food

3. Restrictions on techniques to mechanically remove meat from bones, and
4. Meat from tested animals will not be certified as USDA-inspected until test results are final.

Is cow's milk a source of BSE?

Scientific research indicates that BSE cannot be transmitted in cow's milk, even if the milk comes from a cow with BSE.

When and how did BSE in cattle occur?

BSE in cattle was first reported in 1986 in the United Kingdom (UK). The exact origins of BSE remain uncertain but cattle may have become infected when fed feed contaminated with scrapie-infected sheep meat-and-bone meal (MBM). Scrapie is a prion disease in sheep similar to BSE in cattle. The scientific evidence suggests that the U.K. BSE outbreak in cattle then was expanded by feeding BSE-contaminated cattle protein (MBM) to calves. The causal agent is thought to be a modified form of a protein, called a prion, which becomes infectious and accumulates in neural tissues causing a fatal, degenerative, neurological disease. These abnormal prions are resistant to common food disinfection treatments. It is important for consumers to know that BSE, like other forms of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE), is not a communicable disease- most TSEs are not spread easily between animals, or to humans.

What countries have reported cases of BSE or are considered to have a substantial risk associated with BSE?

These countries are: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia, The Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Japan, and United Kingdom (Great Britain including Northern Ireland and the Falkland Islands).

Canada (May 2003) and the U.S. (December 2003) each have recently reported one BSE-positive cow, but remain countries considered to have a low risk. The U.S. BSE-positive cow reported in December 2003 was confirmed to have been imported from Canada in 2001.

(Information source for this article is: <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~comm/bsefaq.html>)

Healthy Culpeper

Healthy Culpeper is a collaboration of over 55 community partners, i.e. agencies, businesses, law enforcement, local government, professionals, and programs available in Culpeper County. The vision of the collaboration is a commitment to working together to create a healthy, secure, and educated community by developing and providing services that promote interdependence, acknowledge the importance of family-like support systems, and are participant-focused.

Healthy Culpeper subcommittees are currently working on the following projects:

- Early Childhood
 - The workgroup is discussing survey results and planning for the Bridges program. Bridges is a kindergarten orientation program offered for four weeks during the summer.
 - Members are also discussing ways to increase literacy skills among preschoolers.
 - Members planned the February 12th Fun Fair at the Galbreath Marshall Building (Head Start).
Among the community partners presenting seminars were:
 - Culpeper County Public Schools
 - Culpeper County Health Department
 - Virginia Cooperative Extension
 - Members are also beginning to plan the next For A Child's Health event which will be held in April 2004.
- Teens
 - The Prevention Coalition agreed to develop a comprehensive community prevention plan. The Coalition will be meeting with Calvin Nunnally, Sr. MS, Virginia Suicide Prevention Training and Outreach Coordinator to discuss how to develop the prevention plan.
- Adults
 - Members are updating the Senior Navigator website and preparing a brochure that would describe Senior Navigator and list locations where the website can be accessed by the community.
- Other activities
 - The Healthy Culpeper Board is discussing sponsorship of a community health needs assessment and action plan.
 - Nuestra Comunidad – Each month community partners are recording 5-10 minute segments of information for the Spanish-speaking community to be aired on Channel 23. The following community partners are appearing during January:
 - Culpeper County Health Department
 - Culpeper Regional Hospital
 - Free Clinic
 - Pregnancy Centers of Central Virginia
 - For February, the following community partners will be recording information:
 - Agricultural Serving Center
 - Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District
 - Farm Service Agency
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - A group of community leaders has been formed to discuss the issue of day laborers.

If you are interested in participating, or have any questions, please contact me at 829-2065 ext. 308 or via email colson@hfculpeper.org.

Cindy Colson
Director
Healthy Culpeper

Healthy Culpeper: Cindy Colson 829-2065 ext. 308 or via email colson@hfculpeper.org.

Everything You Wanted to Know about the Culpeper Literacy Council but were afraid to ask

HOW DID THE COUNCIL BEGIN?

The effort toward improved literacy in the Culpeper area was initiated by a group of concerned citizens from the community. In January of 1987, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church of Culpeper supported the program with a one-time grant of \$1,500 to help with the purchase of start-up materials. The Church later supplied a temporary office for the newly formed Council. While the Council is no longer housed at the Church, the Church continues to take an active interest in the Council, which is expressed through financial support.

The Council held its first formal meeting in 1988 and was established as non-profit in 1989. It moved to its present location, generously donated by Joe Daniel in the basement of the Jefferson Homebuilders building, in 1990. Our current director, who came on board in July 2003, is the fourth person to hold the position in 16 years. Presently, the board employs 3 part-time staff, a director, an educational coordinator, and a secretary.

The Council is governed by a board of twelve to fifteen members. The board meets bi-monthly, and committees meet separately from regular board meetings. The director reports to the board at each bi-monthly meeting.

The purpose of the Council, as stated in its by-laws, is "to promote, coordinate, and facilitate planning and development of literacy services in Culpeper County". To this end, the Council offers one-on-one tutoring to adults wishing to learn to read, improve basic skills, obtain a GED, or learn English as a second language. The Council also teaches a pre-GED/GED class consisting of students from the community as well as referrals from other service organizations.

The Council sees itself as an advocate for literacy and adult education, and continues to make as many educational opportunities as possible, available to the Culpeper community. While its primary emphasis is, and will remain, one-on-one tutoring, the Council may, from time to time, hold classes in its office using paid, professional teachers, as funding allows.

HOW IS THE COUNCIL FUNDED?

The Council is a non-profit organization and is not affiliated with any government agency. It is a Piedmont United Way agency and receives approximately one-third of its funds from United Way. The balance of funding comes from Virginia Literacy Foundation, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Endowment Fund, Town of Culpeper, County of Culpeper, grants, social and civic organizations in Culpeper County, and residents of Culpeper County.

HOW ARE STUDENTS RECRUITED?

Any way we can! In a rural area such as ours, the recruitment of students is one of our greatest challenges. We depend on referrals from our students themselves, who tell family and friends. In addition, we use radio announcements, newspaper articles, and television to get the word out.



*One out of 5
Americans can't
read this sentence.*

*But with your
help, we can all
overcome
illiteracy.*

For additional information, please contact Kim Jebson, Director at 825-5804.

County Of Culpeper Employee of the Year Katrina Miller



Instead of the normal sights that each of us see each day while at work, Katrina Miller has the view of inmates getting prepared to be sent up to Jail, transported to other facilities such as the courtroom, and placed in the temporary cells that are right next to the office. She has casual conversations each day with the trustees, has to wait to be buzzed through two doors to enter or exit, and shares an office with three other employees. While dealing with the environment and the inmates who call this place home, Katrina has her own set of duties and responsibilities. She has worked in the Jail as a Clerk for the Sheriff's Office for 5 years and is relied upon to prepare accounts payable for the Jail, schedule machinery repairs, keep track of Jail credits, maintain inmates' files, and answer the telephones. She works along with the Department of Corrections, and whenever it is needed, she helps the public at the lobby window. During a recent review conducted by the USDA commodity food program, Katrina was commended for an excellent job in managing and maximizing the usage of the donated foods. She also participated in organizing a Christmas party for the children of the Sheriff's Office last year.

Katrina says, "working at the Jail can be odd at times, but situations are dealt more easily when you work with great and knowledgeable people. I enjoy my job and everyone I work with. They continually help me to learn as much as possible. I especially would like to thank Lieutenant Mary Dwyer and Janet Kilby."

Katrina was selected Employee of the Year by the employees of the County and was presented this award at the County's Annual Employee Christmas Party. She received a reserved parking space for one year, a day off, an embroidered jacket and a \$100 bonus that was paid for out of the Employee Action Committee fund. Her picture is also displayed at the County Administration building.